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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000648

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [PNAT](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#) [KISL](#)  
SUBJECT: FADHILA PARTY MEMBER WARNS SHIA ANGER MAY NOT BE  
CONTAINABLE FOLLOWING ANOTHER SAMARRA-LIKE ATTACK

REF: A. BASRAH 26

[B](#). BASRAH 29  
[C](#). BAGHDAD 626

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)  
AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: In a February 27 phone conversation with PolFSN, Fadhila Parliamentarian Mohammed Ismail al-Kusai said that Ayatollah Mohammed al-Yaqubi thinks Shia anger will be difficult to contain if another attack of the magnitude of the Samarra February 22 bombing occurs. Al-Kusai said recent violence in Basrah (Ref A) shows that Shia emotions are currently so volatile that not even the provincial government could prevent such outbreaks. Al-Kusai sought to distance both his party and Basrah Governor al-Wahili from Muqtada's February 26 televised statement in Basrah calling for the withdrawal of Coalition forces (Ref B). As reported Ref C, Al-Kusai said Fadhila will work to preserve the unity of the Shia coalition. END SUMMARY

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Shia Anger Ready to Boil Over  
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[1](#)2. (C) In a February 27 phone conversation, Fadhila Parliamentarian Mohammed Ismail al-Kusai told PolFSN that Party spiritual leader Ayatollah Mohammed al-Yaqubi had raised with him the intensity of Shia anger after the February 22 attack on the Al-Askariyah Shrine in Samarra. Ayatollah Yaqubi expressed to al-Kusai his concern that, if another attack against a major Shia target occurs, neither the Marjaiya nor Iraq's political leaders will be able to control the Shia street. Ayatollah Yaqubi warned al-Kusai the response of many Shia to such an attack would be explosive. This is because such attacks are an affront to the honor of the Shia, al-Kusai said. Al-Kusai added that February 22 burning of the Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) headquarters in Basrah reflected the potency of Shia anger.

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Basrah Governor's Ties to Muqtada al-Sadr  
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[1](#)3. (C) Al-Kusai sought to distance both his party and Basrah Governor al-Wahili from Muqtada's February 26 televised statement in Basrah calling for the withdrawal of Coalition forces (Ref B). He attributed the Governor's on camera presence during Muqtada's statement to the latter's importance as a national figure and the close relationship between the two men's families. Al-Kusai said that when Muqtada al-Sadr's father, Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr, was killed by Saddam Hussein in 1999, Governor al-Wahili's brother helped members of the al-Sadr family escape Iraq into Iran.

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Comment  
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14. (C) Ayatollah Yaqubi's reported views echo what have heard from other contacts: the Shia street could become uncontrollable in the event of another Samarra-like catastrophic attack.  
KHALILZAD